DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 216 JC 830 194

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TITLE Towards New Directions in Black Studies: Black Studies, the Computer Age.
PUB DATE 7 Apr 83
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at a meeting of the National Council on Black Studies (April 7, 1983).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Black Education; *Black Studies; Community Colleges; *Computer Oriented Programs; *Educational Technology; Employer Employee Relationship; *Multicultural Education; Two Year Colleges; Videotape Cassettes
IDENTIFIERS Laney College CA

ABSTRACT

The importance of utilizing computer-age technology in various aspects of Black Studies instruction is discussed in this paper. After stressing the continued need for Black Studies programs, the paper describes the evolution of an idea to videotape Ethnic Studies course material in order to improve instruction and make material available to students for future reference. The next sections examine the possibility of using computers in Black and Ethnic Studies to store information for easy access by instructors, then suggest specific areas of Black Studies which could be stored on computer discs or video-cassettes, and point out the computer's potential in creating an archive for future research and community service. After addressing the failure of Black Studies departments nationwide to meet university articulation requirments, the paper discusses the proposed establishment of an occupational core of courses at Laney College designed to teach business and industry management and working personnel the concept of multicultural management (i.e., managing employees other than white males) in order to improve employer relationships with minority employees and thus allow for greater productivity in the minority workforce. Finally, the paper describes the results of a survey of managers with a large proportion of minority employees which requested their ideas on the design of such courses. (DAB)

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ED230216

A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL ON BLACK STUDIES APRIL 7, 1983

"TOWARDS NEW DIRECTIONS IN BLACK STUDIES: BLACK STUDIES, THE COMPUTER AGE"

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TOWARD NEW DIRECTIONS IN BLACK STUDIES: BLACK STUDIES FOR THE COMPUTER AGE

INTRODUCTION

Research for this paper was prompted by the stark reality that Black Studies which has such a dramatic conception in the 1960's had now been existence for over fifteen years. It has been several years since the first department was actually instituted at Merritt College in Oakland, California and long since the stormy confrontation between Dr. Nathan Hare and ex-Senator then President Hayakawa of San Francisco State University.

Black Studies as conceived in that period, was brought about to meet the educational needs of that time with many projections for the future as well. The concept of Black Studies in itself was revolutionary, which it indeed should have been. This was accompanied by the thrust for adequate recognition of Black culture and Black contributions to the United States and the rest of the world.

PURPOSE

These ideals must not be sacrificed nor should they ever be abondoned. However, another important concept has surfaced and that is that the entire world is in a stage of major transformation and nowhere is that more true than in the field of education. Black Studies must be involved in the realm of that transformation and without loosing the basic ideals for which it was originally founded. The purpose of this paper will be to discuss the Nature and Thrust of that transformation into the computer age of the 1980's.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Methodology for this paper will be thorough the utilization of random sample research done through surveys, available data published in Journals and books and interviews with people actively engaged with and supportive of Black Studies.

BLACK STUDIES, COMPUTERS AND VIDEO-TAPES

Recently during lunch hour in the Beginner's Inn at Laney College, I was pleased to dine with a progressive administrator at which time, I carefully enumerated my proposal for a new direction in teaching Black Studies. He appeared to be interested in the proposal, which was promptly submitted to his department. At this time, the proposal had been directed to experts at the District for processing into grant form. The idea of subjecting Black Studies data to computer software as a special class project was indeed an idea whose time had come.

VIDEO-CASSETTS

About eight years ago, I realized that with my large Afro-American History beginning classes, I was in need of a visual aid help beyond the traditional use of films and slides. This project involved the use of a Black African map which had to be completed through the use of research data supplied by various departments of the library. At that time, a special F.I.P.P. grant had been donated to use video-materials as aids in teaching. Several departments such as Math and English had made extensive use of tapes, but the Social Sciences were using them sparingly. It was at this point that I asked a Laney College research librarian to aid me in my effort to video-tape this project so that it might be available to students for future reference.[1] Students would be able to use the project even in the absence of an instructor, anytime or purpose for review. Not only did the students learn material

concerning the project, but they also learned geography, African civilization and other special skills were made readily available.

Two years after that, I made a tape alone to review the beginning section of Afro-American History and to serve as introduction for teachers and students not familiar with early African American History. The project was suggested by a former student who had gone onto do graduate work in Cinematography.[2] This tape was essentially much more professional than the previous tape as several books, documents, photos, animal sounds, human sounds and other resources were compiled. Not only could the student listen to the instructor's lecture but he could also have access to actual photos, famous paintings and other visual documents used to display pure authenticity in Afro-American History. There was a review and an outline of the class and in no way did it interfere with the actual teaching of or replace the class.

THE CONTINUING NEED FOR BLACK EDUCATION

"In short, educational institutions help students to see themselves in the proper cultural and historical perspectives and offer them the tools necessary for survival."[3] These were the words written by Orlando Taylor thirteen years ago in identifying the need for Black education and the direction for Black education at the time. In 1983, these words still rang true. Students still need to see themselves in proper cultural and historical perspectives and still need the tools necessary for survival.

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[1]Dr. William Pettus

[2]Phyllis Pendelton

[3]Orlando L. Taylor, "New Directions for American Education" Journal of Blacks Studies, (Vol,1, Number 1, September 1970), p.104

THE COMPUTERS IN BLACK STUDIES

In 1983, Video-Technology is abounding and the age of the computer has most dramatically arrived. Having discussed some of the merit of the video-cassette, the computer can and needs to be utilized in the field of Black Studies.

During the past, great Black curators such as Arthur Schomburg, Carter G. Woodson and Mary Church Terrell have taken great pains to preserve and to make available the Black History and Contributions of Blacks to the world. Arthur Schomburg, who was born in Puerto Rico in 1874, established the now famous library bearing his name in New York City. His collection today contains over 50,000 books, periodical and pamphlets. It contains 4,000 manusacripts, 15,000 photos, 1,000 microfilms reels of America and 140 pieces of African art objects. Hundreds of tapes, records of films, Zulu Nursery Rhymes, Bantu tales and others.[4] This collection comprises literally blocks and huge volumes of materials in New York's Public Library System. With the use of computers much of the material that is least used, let alone known by scholars and laymen alike would be placed and stored in computers for use by students, teachers, researchers, foreign embassies and others. Not all Black material could be stored in one computer, but different and more significant items could be utilized for different needs. For example, the writer could use the computer to find specific material not readily available in books but exclusively taken from primary sources. Teachers in grades K-12 could present biographies of famous Blacks and arrange programs for Black History Month, Martin K. King Day, Malcolm X Day and other very famous events. Graphs on Black migration, economic trends,

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[4] Arthur Schomburg Center for Research. In the Black Culture in The Negro History Bulletin (March 1981), p. 83.

infant mortality and many issus concerning Black and other minorities could be readily available and implemented for marketing experts, scholars and those from the business, professional and academic world.

The computer search could eliminate time, make different data readily available and enhance the desire to pursue Black and Ethnic Studies even further thrc.gh novels and innovative means. The computer could act as a supplement for established courses in Black, Asian, Mexican and Native American Studies and give instructors of traditional history courses not readily competent in Black Studies, as an example, a quick and ready source of many volumes of the discipline. This would take Black Studies to areas never ventured.

SPECIFIC AREAS TO BE SERVED BY THE COMPUTER

Certain areas in Black History, Culture, Sociology and the Social Sciences could be subjected to computer disc with each disc serving a specific area of expertise. Such areas as: (1) The Slave Trade (2) The Black Renaissance (3) The Early Black Educator (4) The Plantation (5) The Black Cowboy, Soldier and the Black Sheriff in the Old West (6) The Origin and Effect of Jim Crowism (7) The Reconstruction Period (8) The Civil War Period and various others could be placed on individualized computer disc and stored for reference as computer aids in teaching and research. The same process could be carried over to the Video-Cassett.

THE COMPUTER-VIDEO SET LIBRARY

Such a collection when completed could become the focal point of a new cassett tape computer disc library established for all areas of Ethnic Studies. It would be an important step in Ethnic Studies curation and research and to forge a new direction in the use of the computer as a teaching tool. Materials would be processed like a regular library and then returned. It could act as an archives for future research and could serve the total community such as church groups, senior citizens, juvenile facilities and other civil areas.

THE NEED FOR BLACK STUDIES, COMMUNITY, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ARTICULATION

Recently while reviewing the articulation agreement betwen Laney College and the Universities of California, that I always suspected was most clearly evident in that the articulation agreement showed none of the Black or Ethnic Studies courses articulated with any of the Black or Ethnic Studies courses between the universities and Laney College.[5] One typical example could be taken from the agreement of November 11, 1982 which reads" "Laney College, Univerisity of California, Berkeley Campus, College of Letters and Science," which gave requirements for reading composition. It required Black Studies 1A, 1B Black Literature and Composition, English 1A, 1B and English 2A, 2B. The Black Studies courses didn't meet any Ethnic Studies requirements but did meet English requirements; Afro-American History 30A, 30B met the Social Science and History requirements and 8A, 8B, 9A, 1C, 5, 7, 10, 12 and 43 met only Social Science requirements.[6] These are all general requirements but they were no where, any reference to meeting any Black Studies requirements at the university but any of the Black Studies courses.

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[5]Articulation Agreement between Laney College and the Univerisity of California of Berkeley (November 9, 1982)

[6]Articulation Agreemert between Laney College and the University of California of Berkeley (November 9, 1982)

This demonstrates a major failure on the part of Black Studies Departments nationwide. There is a more than ever pressing need that courses from Laney College and other community colleges meet the requirements for a degree in Black Studies Department, it will not be done by anyone else.

For example, a student from the community colleges majoring in Political Science could transfer his courses directly from Political Science into the lower division Political Science course. Standards of the community college level are directly anticipated to meet lower division units in the Political Science Department in the University. We find no such definition at the University of California and Laney College. This serves as a primary example of an area which needs our substantial attention.

THE OCCUPATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM IN ETHNIC STUDIES

At Laney College, I am endeavoring to establish an occupational core of courses; specifically aimed at business and industry management and working personnel. It appears that there is a new emerging concept of management; mainly multi-cultural management and technology. The new concept is most adequately explained in the exceptionally new written book: The Black Manager by a Black husband and wife managment team, Floyd Dickens, Jr. and Jacqueline Dickens. Multi-cultural management has been defined by this team as "'The act, art and practice of leading and directing people other than white males in the attaining of organizational books.'"[7]

To further strengthen my assertion for the necessity of producing a curriculum core in Black Studies designed to teach this new technology, a survey was submitted to people who management a significant portion of the Black, women, and other Ethnic groups in their employment for their suggestions. Several categories to choose from were written into the survey with adequate space for commentary. The survey asked for race, sex and institutional or industry that the

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[7] Floyd L. Jr. and Jacqueline Dickens. The Black Manager Making it in the Corporate World, (Amacon Press, New York, New York, 1982), p. 4

surveyee was involved with. The survey was given to management regardless of race or sex. The participants ranged from doctors of mental insitutions to people in private industries.

There were six categories in the survey asking for participants to list as many of the items as they pleased. The preamble to the examination read: "Please mark as many of the columns as you please. An Ethnic Studies course that would aid management in being more effective in its relationship to minorities and therefore leading to greater productivity in the minority work force should cover the following: (A) A brief overview of problems confronting management and minority. (B) Effective management techniques already in existence between management and minorities. (C) Specific problems which relate to each minority group. (D) Specific problems which relate to the female of each minority group. (E) Specific problem which relate to the male of each minority group with suggested solutions. (F) Other things - please elaborate as much as possible. 100 percent of the surveyee chose numbers as follows: (A) 50 percent chose number B (B) 75 percent chose number C (C) 75 percent chose number D (D) 75 percent chose number E and (E) 75 percent number F. Fully 50 percent of the females did not chose number B, emphasizing effective management techniques alredy in existence; but all chose number D dealing with problems confronting management and minorities. In the F categories white females emphasized the need for persons to be trained specifically before handling persons from various backgrounds. Black females suggested the training of both groups and that minorities be trained by minorities in such basics as getting to work on time, not overstaying breaks and motivating. Black male managers emphasized parity and equality where white male managers emphasized the need for training in better communications skills. Overall, the response was unanimous that having in multi-cultural management technology was greatly needed.

The findings seemed to confirmed the feeling by the Dickens in their book that minorities and women could not produce to their maximum potential as long as they were managed with the standard management techniques that were designed for white males because society had made different demands on different and specific groups.[9]

The book also made some suggestions worth noting for example: (1) Entry level jobs for minorities must be programmed specifically. In other words, minorities must be programmed into the proper jobs in the beginning. (2) Minorities had to be included in the decision making process at an early stage, especially in decisions that would have a major impact on their lives.[10] A good example would be women on maturity leave, affirmative action programs or the lack of them, promotion procedures and management availability for minorities, grievances procedures and others.

Black Studies and, indeed, Ethnic Studies has come a long way, but must be upgraded and re-examined. Computer, cassett and video-cassett technology can and must be utilized for maxium efficiency and continued success. Secondly, Black Studies curriculum can be harnessed to meet the distinct and contemporary need of the academic and business community. The need and opportunity are calling and the expertise and trained personnel are there. The future is ours.

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[9]Dickens and Dickens (op.at.) p.5

[10]Dickens and Dickens (op.at.) p.5

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JUL 15 1983